

WOODBURY UNIVERISTY

FEBRUARY 2024

# NEWSLETTER

YOUR DREAM. OUR MISSION.



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DIVERSITY  
EQUITY &  
INCLUSION

# FEBRUARY HOLIDAYS

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## WELCOME BACK, WOODBURY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS!

We hope you had a rejuvenating and enjoyable winter break filled with rest, laughter, and memorable moments. As we embark on this new semester together, we're thrilled to have each and every one of you back on campus, ready to dive into another exciting chapter of your academic journey.

Whether you're returning to familiar faces or joining us for the first time, know that you are an integral part of our vibrant Woodbury community. As we navigate through the challenges and triumphs of the upcoming semester, remember that you have a wealth of support and resources at your fingertips. From dedicated faculty and staff to your fellow peers, we're all here to help you thrive and succeed.

Let's approach this semester with enthusiasm, determination, and a commitment to excellence. Let's challenge ourselves, support one another, and embrace the opportunities for growth and learning that lie ahead.

Here's to a fantastic semester filled with discovery, creativity, and accomplishment. Welcome back, Woodbury University students – together, let's make this semester truly extraordinary!





## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black History Month, initially established as Negro History Week in 1926 by historian Carter G. Woodson, holds profound significance in recognizing the contributions, struggles, and resilience of Black people throughout history. Expanded to a month-long observance in 1976, it serves as a crucial platform to celebrate the achievements and cultural heritage of Black individuals, highlighting their pivotal roles in shaping societies worldwide despite enduring systemic oppression. This annual commemoration not only honors the remarkable achievements of Black leaders, activists, artists, and innovators but also fosters awareness, education, and dialogue around the ongoing fight for racial justice and equality, serving as a catalyst for social change and collective progress.





# FEBRUARY 10

## LUNAR NEW YEAR

Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year or Spring Festival, has a rich history spanning over thousands of years, deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture and mythology. It marks the beginning of the lunar calendar and is celebrated by millions of people across Asia and around the world. With origins dating back to ancient agricultural rituals, Lunar New Year holds immense cultural, familial, and spiritual significance, symbolizing renewal, prosperity, and the opportunity for a fresh start. The festival is characterized by vibrant festivities, including family reunions, feasting, dragon and lion dances, fireworks, and the exchange of red envelopes containing monetary gifts. Beyond its cultural importance, Lunar New Year serves as a time for reflection, gratitude, and the strengthening of familial bonds, fostering a sense of unity and community while preserving cherished traditions passed down through generations.







## FEBRUARY 10

### TẾT

Tết, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, holds profound historical and cultural significance in Vietnamese society. Rooted in ancient agricultural practices and folklore, Tết marks the arrival of spring and the beginning of a new lunar year. Its origins date back thousands of years, evolving from traditional agricultural rituals into a celebration of family, community, and cultural heritage. Tết represents a time for families to come together, honor ancestors, and pay respects to elders. Symbolic customs and traditions, such as cleaning homes to sweep away bad luck, decorating with vibrant flowers, and preparing special foods like bánh chưng and bánh dày, are observed during this festive period. Beyond its cultural importance, Tết embodies values of gratitude, renewal, and hope for prosperity in the coming year, fostering a strong sense of unity and identity among the Vietnamese people, both at home and abroad.





# FEBRUARY 13

## MARDI GRAS

Mardi Gras, French for "Fat Tuesday," has a vibrant history dating back to medieval Europe but has evolved into a globally celebrated festival, with New Orleans standing out as a major hub. Rooted in pre-Lenten traditions, Mardi Gras is a period of revelry and merriment culminating in a final day of feasting and festivities before the somber season of Lent begins. The celebration arrived in North America through French colonization and took on a unique character in New Orleans, blending French, African, Spanish, and Creole influences. Today, Mardi Gras is synonymous with elaborate parades, colorful costumes, lively music, and the tossing of beads and trinkets. It serves as a jubilant expression of cultural diversity, community spirit, and a celebration of life's exuberance. Mardi Gras has become a symbol of letting loose, embracing joy, and appreciating the vibrant tapestry of cultures that contribute to this exuberant celebration with family and friends.



# FEBRUARY 16

## NATIONAL CAREGIVERS DAY

National Caregivers Day, typically observed on the third Friday of February, is a relatively recent addition to the calendar, created to honor and recognize the selfless dedication of caregivers. These individuals play a crucial role in providing physical, emotional, and often long-term support to those in need, including the elderly, individuals with disabilities, or those facing health challenges. The day aims to acknowledge the sacrifices, compassion, and tireless efforts of caregivers who often go unrecognized. It serves as an opportunity for gratitude, raising awareness about the challenges caregivers face, and promoting a collective appreciation for their invaluable contributions to the well-being of others. National Caregivers Day underscores the importance of compassion, support networks, and community acknowledgment for those who devote their time and energy to caring for others in various capacities.





# FEBRUARY 16

## MAGHA PUJA DAY

Magha Puja Day, also known as Sangha Day, is an important Buddhist holiday celebrated on the full moon day of the third lunar month. The day commemorates a significant event in the life of Lord Buddha, where he delivered an impromptu sermon to a spontaneously gathered assembly of 1,250 enlightened monks. This event, known as the "Fourfold Assembly," symbolizes the core principles of Buddhism: discipline, harmony, unity, and the pursuit of enlightenment. Magha Puja Day emphasizes the importance of following the Buddhist teachings, practicing meditation, and honoring the Sangha, the community of ordained monks and nuns who preserve and propagate the Dharma. It serves as a reminder of the fundamental values of Buddhism and provides an opportunity for devotees to reaffirm their commitment to spiritual practice, moral conduct, and the pursuit of inner peace and liberation.







# FEBRUARY 20

## WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

The World Day of Social Justice, observed annually on February 20th, emerged from the United Nations to promote social justice and address the myriad challenges faced by societies worldwide. Established in 2007, this day underscores the importance of fostering equitable opportunities, reducing inequality, and promoting inclusion and social cohesion. It is rooted in the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and encourages global efforts to eradicate poverty, advance gender equality, ensure access to education and healthcare, and combat discrimination. The day serves as a global platform for raising awareness about social injustices and advocating for policies and actions that contribute to a fair and just world. By emphasizing the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental issues, the World Day of Social Justice aims to inspire collective efforts towards building societies that prioritize dignity, equality, and respect for human rights.



# FEBRUARY 24

## MAKHA BUCHA DAY

Makha Bucha Day, a significant Buddhist observance, commemorates a spontaneous gathering of 1,250 monks who came to pay homage to Lord Buddha without prior arrangement. This event occurred on the full moon day of the third lunar month, approximately 45 years after Buddha's enlightenment. Makha Bucha, also known as Magha Puja, is observed in Thailand and other Theravada Buddhist countries to honor the principles of Buddhism and highlight the importance of ethical conduct, meditation, and the unity of the Sangha (monastic community). Devotees engage in merit-making activities, participate in candlelit processions around temples, and attend sermons to reaffirm their commitment to the teachings of Lord Buddha. The day serves as a reminder of the core values of Buddhism and provides an opportunity for spiritual reflection, deepening one's practice, and fostering a sense of community among followers.

